



County of Los Angeles
Department of Public Social Services

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GENERAL RELIEF PROGRAM FACT SHEET

DESCRIPTION

General Relief (GR) assists needy adults who are ineligible for State or federal assistance. An average GR case consists of one person, living alone, with no income or resources. The maximum monthly GR grant is \$221.

In January 2014, with the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) most GR applicants/participants are eligible for Medi-Cal benefits and have access to a managed care health plan. Consequently, applicants/participants may now receive ongoing medical services through their designated medical provider. Individuals who have Medi-Cal pending or do not have a physician assigned are referred to the Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) for assessment services. Assessment services are available for this group of people via a Non-financial agreement.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for GR, an individual must be a resident of Los Angeles County. Non-needy caretakers who are timed-off of the CalWORKs Program are also eligible, if the following GR eligibility requirements are met:

- Monthly net income is lower than the maximum GR grant of \$221 for one person.
- Personal property has a combined value of \$500 or less per adult.
- Motor vehicle is valued at \$4,500 or less. Only one motor vehicle may be retained.
- Cash on hand or in a bank account is valued at \$50 or less at application, or \$1,500 or less after approval; and
- Real Property (home) has an assessed value of \$34,000 or less and signs a lien, allowing the County to recover GR payments received under certain circumstances.

Ineligibles

An individual is ineligible to GR if he or she:

- Was convicted of a drug felony after 12/31/97, and is an unaided member of a CalWORKs Assistance Unit.
- Is in violation of probation or parole.
- Is fleeing to avoid prosecution or custody/confinement after a felony conviction.

SUBSTANCE USE PRE-SCREENING REQUIREMENT

Individuals complete a pre-screening questionnaire at application for potential substance use. If determined to have a substance use problem, individuals must attend a County-approved treatment program as a condition of eligibility for GR.

SERVICES AVAILABLE:

Emergency Aid

If eligible to GR, the following aid may be available while GR is pending:

- Aid to Prevent Eviction;
- Aid to Prevent Utility Shut-off or to Restore Utilities;
- Aid to First Paycheck;
- Meal and Housing Vouchers;
- Transportation to seek jobs/keep medical appointments, etc.; and
- Expedited CalFresh. Approximately 90% of GR participants also receive CalFresh benefits.

Special Needs

Individuals may receive:

- A transportation allowance to look for work;
- A special/therapeutic diet allowance as verified by a doctor; and
- An allowance for tools needed to begin a new job.

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME AND MEDI-CAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Social Workers provide advocacy to help physically/mentally disabled individuals apply for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), obtain early SSI approval, and become self-sufficient. If approved for SSI, the maximum monthly grant is \$877.40 versus the monthly GR grant of \$221. In addition, SSI recipients receive full-scope Medi-Cal.

PHYSICAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT FOR GENERAL RELIEF APPLICANTS/PARTICIPANTS

As a condition of eligibility for GR, individuals are required to participate in employment-related activities offered by the GR Opportunities to Work (GROW) Program. These activities are geared to help individuals obtain or retain employment, unless the individual self discloses that there is a physical condition that prevents the person from working at minimum, in a sedentary capacity.

When an individual discloses that he/she is unable to work/unemployable, the case-carrying Eligibility Worker refers the individual for a physical examination with their designated medical provider. Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) utilizes the Assessment for General Relief, ABP 1676-1 form to have physicians document the individual's medical condition. Based on this information, the individual is found to be Employable/able to work with or without restrictions; Temporary or Permanently Unemployable. The GR caseload includes the following employability status classifications:

Employable

Individuals deemed "Employable" may receive GR for nine months in any 12-month period, provided they continue to comply with GROW Program requirements. Individuals who have certain limitations/restrictions in the type of work they can perform are also considered employable. However, GROW participation is limited to the functional limitations/restrictions identified by the medical providers.

Unemployable

GR eligibility for unemployable individuals is not time limited, nor are they required to participate in GROW. Severely disabled individuals must apply for SSI and are referred to an SSI Advocate for assistance.

Administratively Unemployable

Individuals who are not able to work due to circumstances other than physical or mental disabilities, may be designated AU. For example, an AU designation may be assigned because an individual provides full-time care to an incapacitated family member, is pregnant, or is 65 years of age or older. GR eligibility is not time limited for AUs, and they are not required to participate in GROW.

Unemployable Volunteer

Individuals designated unemployable may volunteer to participate in GROW. However, participation in GROW is limited by the disabilities or restrictions determined by the medical provider. GR eligibility for individuals determined Unemployable Volunteers is not time limited, and there are no penalties for those who discontinue GROW participation or do not comply with GROW requirements.

Needs Special Assistance (NSA)

Individuals with mental health disabilities are designated as NSA. NSAs are given priority treatment in the district office and are exempt from most GR requirements. GR eligibility for NSA individuals is not time limited, and they are not required to participate in GROW. The evaluation of mental health disability is conducted by Department of Mental Health or Adult Protective Services staff that are co-located in GR districts. Potentially SSI eligible are referred to an SSI Advocate for assistance with their SSI application.